UNITED
NATIONS

A S

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/79
S/1997/134
14 February 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 14 February 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 13 February 1997 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the eighth anniversary of the Iranian fatwa condemning Salman Rushdie.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under the item entitled "Human rights questions: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) N. H. BIEGMAN
Permanent Representative of the
Netherlands to the United Nations

97-04161 (E) 180297 180297 200297

/...

ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Statement issued on 13 February 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union on the eighth anniversary of the Iranian fatwa against Salman Rushdie

On the eighth anniversary of the publication of the fatwa condemning the British author Salman Rushdie to death and calling for his assassination, the European Union recalls and repeats the solemn affirmations it made on the anniversaries of the fatwa according to which the fatwa, decreed in defiance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principle of the sovereignty of States, in particular regarding the protection by the latter of their nationals, remains null and void.

The European Union deeply regrets the announced increase in the bounty offered to his assassins by a private Iranian organization. Following statements made yesterday by President Rafsanjani, the European Union calls on the Iranian Government to take appropriate steps against any initiative that might endanger ongoing efforts to reach a solution.

The European Union also expresses grave concern over the continuing threats to the life of individuals associated with the work of Mr. Rushdie.

The European Union will continue to take advantage of its critical dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran to defend fundamental rights and freedom of expression. Recalling the conclusions of the European Councils of Madrid in December 1995 and Florence in June 1996, the European Union renews its demands that the Islamic Republic of Iran abide by international law and calls upon the Iranian authorities to further efforts to obtain a satisfactory solution in respect of Salman Rushdie.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus, and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.